

No.	Question	Response
1.	In addition to the desire to have a common look and feel "Shared Portal" infrastructure, there may be a financial benefit based on maintaining a single architected solution. Is this part of the desired outcome? What are the current operation/ maintenance costs for the current state?	The existing web portal maintenance contracts expire in May 2006. As a result, the IRS must take appropriate action to obtain continued operations and maintenance support for its web portal infrastructure. This presents an opportunity for the Service to look at a full range of innovative and cost effective solutions offered by industry.
2.	What firm is currently operating and maintaining PUP, RUP, EUP and Irweb?	The IRS currently has contracts with Accenture Corporation to provide steady state maintenance and operations of the Public User Portal, and IBM for the steady state maintenance and operations of the Registered User Portal and the Employee User Portal. In addition, there are several existing contracts with Computer Science Corporation (CSC) to support the middle and firmware resident on the Registered and Employee User Portals.
3.	Are there current operational problems or concerns that the IRS is looking to "Correct" with this new release?	The IRS is still documenting the operational state of its web portal environments and will provide more detailed information regarding this area in the form of technical specifications.
4.	Is it anticipated that the RFP will be issued to TIPSS3 holders?	At this point, IRS' acquisition strategy has not been finalized. While the IRS has invested in TIPSS and finds it to be a highly effective and efficient contracting vehicle, it is IRS' intent to utilize the RFI process to obtain market research information not constrained by any existing contractual vehicles. Hopefully, the information obtained through the various RFI responses will enable the IRS to completely assess available innovative solutions and industry capabilities that will best address the IRS need.
5.	As a result of the responses received, does the IRS anticipate opportunities to meet with prospective firms for further discussion regarding ideas presented in the RFI response?	Should the IRS have questions regarding individual responses, the responder will be contacted by the Contracting Officer for further information.
6.	Is there an incumbent relative to this opportunity? If so, could you please provide the incumbent contractor, contract #, award and expiration dates, and contract value?	The incumbent contractors currently supporting the IRS' existing web portal infrastructure are: Accenture Corporation via TIPSS-2 Contract Number TIRNO-00-D-00009, Task Orders 11 and 14; and IBM Corporation via TIPSS-2 Contract Number TIRNO-00-D-00018, Task Order 15.
7.	<p>According to the RFI, "Currently, the IRS web portals, including the Public User Portal (PUP), Registered User Portal (RUP), and Employee User Portal (EUP), are supported under several IRS contracts with various vendors that are due to expire in mid-2006."</p> <p>I was hoping to find out some information about the current contractors who provide these services.</p> <p>-Which vendors currently supply the services</p> <p>-what were the contract numbers</p> <p>-when was the award date</p>	<p>Please refer to response to Question No. 6.</p>

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8.	Please provide the rationale for specifying that respondents be certified small businesses (annual revenue cap of \$21 million) considering the size, complexity and service requirements specified in the RFI, including the ability to provide multilingual content and translation services; online services that adhere to contractually-binding service level agreements; complex managed service capabilities; a records retention system; and external web monitoring.	The RFI does not limit responses from certified small businesses. The RFI is open to responses from all types of business concerns, small and large. However, in order to qualify as a small business concern, a company would have to meet the applicable size standard for NAICS code 541512 which is \$21.0 million.
9.	Will a response from a company that is not a certified small business be accepted?	Yes, the Government will accept responses to the RFI from companies that are not a certified small business. The Government is soliciting responses from all firms that are interested, regardless of size. Responses will assist the Government in their market research to access innovative and cost-effective solutions and to determine whether to set-aside, restrict competition or solicit offers from all responsible sources.
10.	Is the intent of releasing this RFI to use it as a mechanism for down-selecting the organizations that will be allowed to submit responses to a subsequent RFP?	The intent of releasing this RFI is to conduct market research to seek information from the information technology industry to assess innovative solutions and industry capabilities that will best address the IRS need.
11.	What is the anticipated date of release for the RFP associated with this RFI?	There is no anticipated date of release for an RFP associated with this RFI. This RFI is being used as a market research vehicle to gather information to access innovative and cost-efficient solutions offered by industry that will best address the IRS needs. At this time, the Government has not finalized an acquisition strategy.
12.	Who are the current 8(a) certified small businesses providing services to the IRS in support of the three portals named in the RFP (PUP, RUP and EUP)?	Please refer to response to Question No. 6.
13.	Who are the current incumbent vendors (and subcontractors, if applicable) providing services related to the three IRS portals named in the RFP?	Please refer to response to Question No. 6.
14.	Please explain whether or not the subsequent RFP will be competed under the TIPPS-2/3 contract, under a different contract vehicle, or as a stand-alone cost competition.	At this time, the Government has not finalized an acquisition strategy.
15.	We provide a web based search engine and we are interested in the Web portal consolidation project out of the IRS. With CSCs modernization contract I believe they will be players on the Web portal project. I'd like to contact them about teaming. Do you have a POC for CSC at IRS that I could call or email?	Please refer to response to Question No. 6.
16.	For notification and scheduling purposes, approximately when, if at all, will you be reaching out to our credential contacts? If there is a structured set of questions which you will use when interviewing these contacts, may we send it to them ahead of time?	A specific time and procedure for these verifications has not been established at this time.

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17.	Reserved	
18.	Page 2, 3. Contact Information Please provide the date referenced in line 2, which reads "no later than 3:00 pm on (MONTH, DAY) 2005."	The RFI due date is no later than 3:00 p.m E.S.T, Monday, April 25, 2005.
19.	Page 3, 5.1.4 Intranet Where are the IRweb servers located? What is the current number of users that use IRweb? What is the current volume (hits) on IRweb? Is IRweb compliant with the IRS Enterprise Architecture?	Servers are located between two computing centers. The number of users includes all IRS employees. On the average every IRS employee visits the site once or twice a day, 65,000 - 70,000 hits per day.
20.	Page 4, 5.2.1 Current Business Load Does the IRS have projected volumes for the PUP, RUP, EUP, and IRweb for years 2006 through 2010?	Current IRS Business Load Projections for the Web Portals are not finalized at this time. Should the IRS issue a solicitation, more specific information will be provided at that time.
21.	Reserved	
22.	Page 10, 7.22 Systems and Development Approach Is there a significant software development component of the Portal effort (PUP, RUP, EUP, or (IRweb) that should be anticipated as part of the pending RFP?	Development will continue to be a requirement. The effort is considered to be at the average level for multiple portals across a large enterprise.
23.	Page 9, 7.15 Multilingual content and translation How many different languages are anticipated to be supported and what are the most likely languages requiring support? What percentage of content and/or transactions would need this type of service?	The IRS has not finalized its requirement for multilingual content and translation at this time. More specific information will be provided at a later date, should the IRS decide to issue a solicitation.
24.	Will the government provide the hardware and COTS software as GFE in the procurement?	This information is not available at this time and will be made available later in the procurement process, should the IRS decide to issue a solicitation.
25.	Is it the desire of the IRS to have the web hosting environment within an IRS data center? If so, please specify the data center(s)?	The IRS has not made a determination on this requirement at this time. More specific data related to this issue will be provided should the IRS decide to issue a solicitation document.
26.	What would IRS define as the most compelling event that is driving IRS toward a portal consolidation effort?	The IRS is facing the pending expiration of its existing web portal maintenance contracts. This need, coupled with the desire for a shared, open portal architecture less dependent on specific products, drives IRS' desire for consolidation.
27.	How will IRS be evaluating vendors in this process? Is there any decision criteria that can be shared?	IRS will be analyzing, not evaluating, responses to assess innovative solutions and industry capabilities that will best address the IRS needs.
28.	Beside contract expiration, is there another compelling event that is driving IRS towards this consolidation effort? (Why would they move away from or change the current vendor relationships used to host their sites currently?)	The IRS will be analyzing <u>all solution opportunities</u> that are most efficient and effective during this market research effort, including completely replacing existing software and infrastructure and/or managing services for the existing portals.

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29.	How will IRS be evaluating vendors in this process? Are there any decision criteria that can be shared?	Please refer to response to Question No. 27.
30.	After reviewing RFI responses from interested vendors, does IRS anticipate contacting each vendor individually to seek additional clarifications from select vendors or anticipate asking follow up questions to obtain additional information?	Please refer to response to Question No. 5.
31.	Is the RFI scope limited primarily to the provision of operations/support services (Managed Services) or does the scope include development /deployment of new portal based services to support the public, registered users and employees ?	The IRS is interested in obtaining vendor capabilities around Managed Services strategies. If you are able to provide your development/deployment capabilities as part of your submission, this data would also be important in helping the IRS ultimately determine the scope of a possible future acquisition, as well as its acquisition strategy.
32.	How will the RFI response be reviewed/evaluated to determine suitability for set asides for SMB (HUB etc)?	Responses to the RFI will be analyzed by the IRS Requirements Team, as well as, Procurement Officials. Responses will be analyzed to determine capability of companies. Additional information may be requested, and/or technical information briefings may be scheduled to assist in the final set-aside decision.
33.	Is it OK to address the RFI response as it relates to a portion of the needs instead of trying to address IRS needs across the board? For example can the RFI response focus on: Support for Employees (EUP); <u>or will such a response be deemed an incomplete response?</u>	It is the IRS' intent to receive RFI responses addressing a complete solution as opposed to addressing partial components.
34.	Is there any mandated IRS standard that must be adhered to integrate/interface different internal IRS applications (current and planned) for access via portals? (For instance: ebXML for document interchange)	No, not for this procurement.
35.	As part of the implementation of the future vision are proof-of-concept pilots/phases contemplated after the RFI and prior to a possible RFP?	At this time, the Government has not finalized an acquisition strategy.
36.	Stated in the background description is the following: "In April 2004, the Operations, Maintenance, and Support of this infrastructure were transitioned from the PRIME Alliance contractual vehicle to a vendor on a TIPSS-2 contract vehicle." I know about the CSC team's PRIME contract, but I am not sure to which TIPSS-2 vendor the work was transitioned as the listing of TIPSS-2 Tasks only identifies when the issue date for the competitive process and not the award date. I would greatly appreciate if you could identify the TIPSS-2 vendor to which the Operations, Maintenance, and Support were transitioned.	Please refer to the response for question #6.

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37.	...we were not able to determine if it was the Government's intention to compete this requirement under full and open competition, or if the Government intends to compete this through an existing ID/IQ, BPA, or similar contract vehicle such as TIPSS-2 or TIPSS-3. If your intention is anything other than a full and open competitive procurement, our ability to respond will largely depend on whether we have or can obtain access to Government's intended vehicle. If you are soliciting comments from industry on possible contracting approaches that would be helpful to know, too.	IRS is soliciting information from industry for market research purposes only. At this time, IRS has not finalized an acquisition strategy.
38.	Do we have to send the "Technical proposal", "Business proposal" and resumes of the skilled consultants as part of an RFI?	This is not a "Request for Proposal," it is a "Request for Information." The IRS is not soliciting proposals. However, the IRS is soliciting information from industry to conduct market research to assess innovative solutions and industry capabilities that will best address the IRS needs. Please refer to Section 7, "RFI Response" on Pages 8 through 12 of Solicitation Number WebPortals032005.
39.	Can we get a sample RFI?	Please review the published RFI, WebPortals032005, and it should provide you with the pertinent information.
40.	In the event that an RFP is issued based on the responses received from the RFI's, what type of contract vehicle would be used to award the contract? Based on our knowledge of the IRS, we do understand that the existing TIPS II contract vehicle is a traditional method used for awarding IT contracts.	At this time, the IRS has not finalized an acquisition strategy of the type of contract vehicle to use in the future.
41.	What is the expected outcome from the RFI responses, is it to develop an RFP or to create a short list of companies that provided the best responses who may be asked to come in and present their capabilities?	The IRS desired outcomes from the RFI is to be able to access the responses to the RFI in consideration of determining its acquisition strategy and the possible development of a solicitation.
42.	Is CMM level 2 certification required, in the event there is an RFP issued?	Should the IRS publish an RFP for this requirement, the appropriate CMM certification level will be described in detail.
43.	In the event an RFP is issued, do you know what the potential size of the contract would be?	At this time, the IRS has not finalized an acquisition strategy.
44.	What architecture is currently being used/supports your four portals?	The RFI describes a mixture of products.
45.	What software is currently being used for your portals?	Software currently being used in the IRS web portals includes JAVA, Web Sphere, .NET, and Vignette.
46.	What environment were the portals developed in?	The Intranet was developed in-house in ASP.NET. The PUP was developed at Accenture utilizing a Vignette tool. The RUP and EUP were developed by CSC in WebSphere.
47.	We are preparing our response to this RFI. Although we did not submit any questions, we would like to receive any public responses to any questions submitted by others.	Please refer to awss.webportals@IRS.gov.